

'MIKADO' AUTHORS MADE NEW COMEDY

Writer Compares Buffoonery of
Farce With Gentler Humor
of Operettas.

It may be that time mellowed certain music experiences as it does old paintings. But true it is, that these traditions of the past have left an indelible impression upon us. H. E. Krehbiel, writing on "Vanished Traditions in Revivals of Gilbert and Sullivan Operas," in the New York Tribune, tells of some of the "legitimate" elements in the light operettas of yesterday, as follows:

"Certain it is that the fundamentals on which the exquisite art of Gilbert and Sullivan are built have been ignored on the operetta (or, so-called, comic opera) stage for decades as completely as they were ignored by the old Gilbert and Sullivan came upon the scene. The comedian is again become what once he was, a crudely, rudely, obvious laugh-provoker. A many years ago, in the heyday of the old Casino, we talked with De Wolf Hopper about his clowning in a perversion of a Viennese operetta. 'My boy, my boy,' he said, 'I've got to have a laugh when I come on. I'll do anything, any old gag, to get that laugh. I'll weep and throw my tears on the stage floor in the shape of torpedoes; but I must get my laugh.'

Blows in With Umbrella. "And he did. He came on the stage riding on the wings of a gale of wind, holding on to an umbrella. And he boomed when the opportunity came and exploded torpedoes on the stage. The people laughed. Hopper was funny, exuberantly funny. It wasn't a Gilbert and Sullivan piece, but he would have done the same thing if it had been. Consider now the other, the Gilbertian, view of the essence of humor, or comicality, if you wish. When 'The Mikado' was in rehearsal at the Savoy Theater in London, Miss Jessie Bond in one scene gave Mr. George Grossmith (he was Ko-Ko of the play) a pushed and he rolled completely over on the stage. Mr. Gilbert was directing the rehearsal. In his characteristically polite manner he interrupted with, 'Would you mind getting that?'

"Certainly, if you wish it," replied Mr. Grossmith, 'but I get an enormous laugh by it.' "So you would if you sat down on a pork pie," commented Mr. Gilbert, quietly.

Comedy of Farce Type. "Here we have an illustration of the difference between the acting of the farce comedian and the new type created by Gilbert & Sullivan—no less by the latter than by the former. The dominant idea of the Savoy operetta (to give it a name by which old-timers will recognize it) was that its comicality should emerge from the absurd things which were said and done by apparently serious personages in the most obviously sincere and unconscious manner. From this arose the delightful incongruity and paradox which is the essence of the Gilbertian comedy. It was intellectual, sometimes so intellectual indeed, that it went over the heads of the multitude, as we suggested in reviewing 'Ruddigore,' with reference particularly to 'Princess Ida,' which we think, remains the finest example of Gilbert's literary skill. But the public acquired an education in time, or a public of a different kind took the place of the old public which found

delight in a man with a funny face, funnily dressed, doing funny things in the most obviously funny manner. "Mr. Gilbert has left us a comment on the action of one of the scenes which gives a deep insight into his ideas of comedy. 'Rose's dealing with the book of etiquette,' he wrote, 'should not be self-conscious; she is perfectly in earnest and should display no sense of incongruity. We abuse ourselves before the cynical young men of the present generation when we feel a warmth in the cardiac region while we recall memories of Geraldine Ulmer as Rose and Pitti-Sing.'

James Huneker Longs for Relief From "Braying" Singers; Raps Opera "Amateurs."

In his leading article in the New York World, James Gibbons Huneker, under the euphonistic title "Hell and Hobnails," comes to the conclusion that Greater New York is most in need of a "no-music week." Says he: "Let us have a 'no-music week' when the braying of singers, the scratching, thumping, and blowing of players will stop and the tortured ears of opera and concert goers may enjoy a temporary peace. Pray Apollo for this boon."

But this is not all that worries our good friend. It is also that "for several years the intrusion of comic opera girls on the stage of grand opera has grown apace. It should be critically discouraged, better still, managerially frowned upon. When a pert young miss who can't sing or act nevertheless holds the opera up and keeps the audience exclaiming, 'ain't she cute,' or 'ain't she cunning,' it's time for the stage manager to intervene."

This leads up to an explosion of wrath on the part of Huneker with regard to the recent debut of Evelyn Herbert in "Rip Van Winkle," which he does as follows:

"The other week a much advertised young 'gal' romped all over the stage of an opera house, playing her role with her legs, which were supposed to be bare. She mugged at the audience, nodded to her friends in the boxes, and generally made a nuisance of herself. Was she applauded? She sang badly, with a voice of mediocre quality, and she was not particularly good-looking. But those naughty, naughty legs! And ugly spindly shanks they were. She would be shocked to learn that she was the most potent contribution to the failure of the particular opera because of her monkeyshines, which proved so diverting to her suburban admirers. "We could instance a score of such annoying cases. Grand opera should not be selected as a proving-ground for amateurs, the majority of whom go into operetta after they make a mess of matters. Meanwhile, the public is the sufferer."

A LYRICAL SYMPHONY

And God sighed in the sunset, and the
Grew quieter than the hills: the myst-
Of ocean, earth and sky was like a
Uttered, but all unheard;
Uttered by every wave and cloud and
With all the immortal glory of mortal
And every wave that broke its heart of
In music on the rainbow-dazzled
Seemed telling, strangely telling, ever-
(Excerpt from poem of Alfred Noyes.)
A story that must still remain untold.

NEWS OF ALEXANDRIA AND NEARBY VIRGINIA

Annual Convention of Retail Mer-
chants to Be Held
May 19-20.

ALEXANDRIA, Va., May 2.—The annual State convention of the Retail Merchants Association of Virginia will be held in the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce on May 19 and 20. It is expected that between 100 and 125 delegates will be present. The Alex-

andria Retail Merchants Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce has appointed the following committee for the convention: Reception—R. E. Knight, chairman; C. M. Hogan, C. B. Swan, J. M. Duncan, A. L. Cohen, W. H. Thomas, M. L. Dinwiddie, B. West, and J. Wolf. Entertainment—Claude W. Fletcher, chairman; R. F. Downham, A. Katz, S. Cohen, J. D. Matter, H. Friedlander, B. D. Ezrine, and R. Blumfeld. Program—C. R. Morrison, chairman; H. W. Wade, J. E. Newell, Llewellyn Dyson, Samuel Gerber, and L. L. Levison.

A meeting of the Holy Name So-

cety of St. Mary's Church will be held at the Lyceum Hall at 7 o'clock tonight to complete plans for the parade and demonstration.

The Old Dominion Boat Club has installed a new locker unit composed of twenty-four lockers.

A meeting of the Alexandria Citizens' Association will be held at McBurney's Hall Monday evening at 8 o'clock. Mr. and Mrs. George B. Kennedy and family have removed from Rosemont to Chevy Chase, Md.

The funeral of the late Willis H.

Goodrich was held from the home of Mrs. G. C. N. Baggett, 920 Duke street, yesterday. Services were conducted by the Rev. William J. Morton, of Christ Episcopal Church. Interment was in Methodist Protestant Cemetery.

Public gospel meeting will be held at the Volunteer Hall by the Volunteers of America at 8 o'clock.

Potomac Lodge, No. 38, Odd Fellows, is making arrangements to attend the annual State convention of that order on May 9, 10, 11, and 12.

U. S. STARS ROBBED OF COSTLY JEWELS

PARIS, May 2.—Scores of well known American, British and French stage stars and many well known notables have been robbed of costly jewels at an all-night dancing palace recently, according to reports made to the police.

An American is declared to have committed the thefts while dancing and dining with the guests.

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